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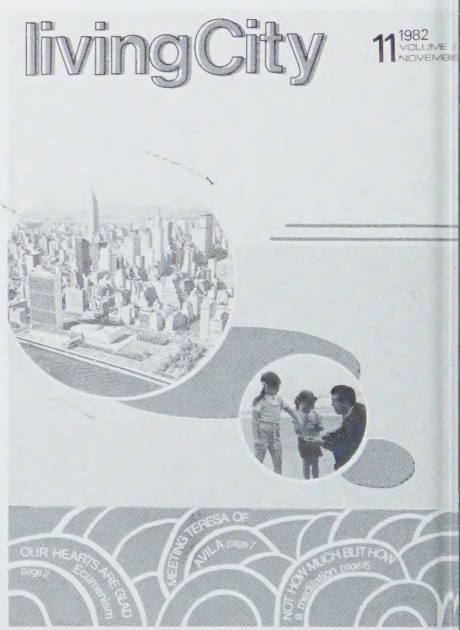
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*Cover:*
*photo (left), and also on page 25, courtesy of the United Nations.*

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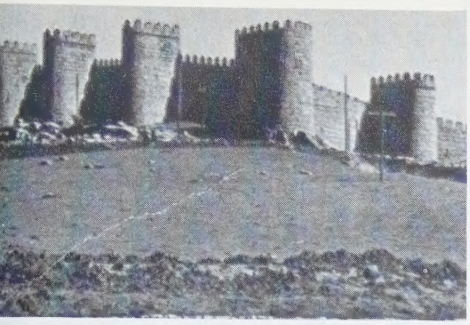

*MEETING TERESA: Teresa of Avila. The fourth centenary once again brings the attention of the world to focus on this extraordinary woman.*

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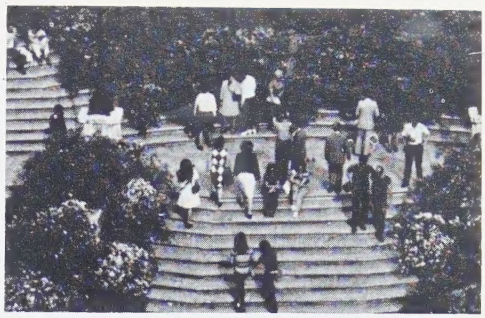

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Dear friends:

We are sorry that we have found it necessary to increase the subscription rates of Living City. We wanted to let you know that as of January 1, 1983 individual copies will cost $1.25 with the following subscription rates:

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We couldn't do otherwise, and we hope that this will not cause much inconvenience.

We would like to invite you to subscribe all your relatives and friends before December 31, 1982 thus taking advantage of the present rates (USA $10.00; Canada US$12.00; Foreign US$18.00; Airmail US$25.00).

Thank you for your understanding and continued generous support.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Young
Circulation Manager

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# Our hearts are glad

*The long awaited visit of the Holy Father to Great Britain produced rich and varied fruits. The following article contains first-hand impressions of that memorable event.*

by IVAN WHITTAKER

His Holiness the Pope's visit consisted of a six day tour during which he visited England, Scotland and Wales, covering the Catholic Archdioceses, in a pastoral encounter with his own people, but with the intention also of commencing, at a personal level, the universal dialogue to which the Holy Spirit is calling us. The response to this determination was manifested on all sides as the representatives of the different Churches, enthusiastically supported by their people, returned love for love.

To be involved in a great event which stirs one's heart and mind, makes it easy, when describing it, to be guilty of hyperbole and too wide a use of superlatives. But here we are concerned with an event entirely unique, and recognized as such by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, all of whom knew that they were witnessing a man of God about his Master's business, displaying a holiness which could not be hidden and a love and concern which mingled with a radiant joy...

The Holy Father came and showed us Christ, and as we watched his expression we knew his thoughts. No man has been more watched than he. No man has become known so quickly by so many.

The essential effect of Pope John Paul's pastoral love is the shift in inherited prejudice from at least veiled hostility on the part of the non-Catholic to a conversion of attitude which could not be avoided without doing violence to an inescapable conviction caused by what they saw... Just as the apostles watched Christ under all kinds of conditions, so we watched the Pope, and as Our Lord could say to Philip, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," so His Holiness bestowed upon the millions who saw him, both in the flesh and on television, a revelation which is too priceless ever to forget.

All who were to encounter the Pope were concerned with making the best of contributions towards the necessary preparations, and long before he arrived Catholics and non-Catholics alike were praying for the success of the visit. What they felt was summed up on many occasions as the leaders of the different Churches stood face-to-face with him before their altars, particularly in Canterbury Cathedral, and made their formal greetings on behalf of us all and reinforced them by mutual embraces.

The Pope wasted nothing by the visit he made to us. From his first address onwards he spoke of the things that matter and have always mattered throughout the history of the Church — spiritually, dogmatically and morally — as well as about those things which are our present problems. He always spoke firmly, pastorally and lovingly. No one could take offence and no one could ignore what was so plainly said.

No event in modern times has produced such numbers to see a man who was the event he created, and it must be seen as an evangelical *tour de force* which has fundamentally changed the general non-Catholic attitude to the Pope. It has changed because they have seen him, because they have heard him. Assumptions and prejudices gave way before this incomparable demonstration of truth that man is made in God's image, and that the Christian is another Christ.

The conflicts during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries during which the English Church sought to emphasize anew the Catholic heritage it believed to be its own, stirred again old prejudices and caused bitter feelings between Church of England people in their own Church. Controversy has formerly been the weapon for the most part and this always means the end of both truth and charity. The Holy Father's visit has revealed an altogether new attitude and approach. It has succeeded in advancing the cause of unity beyond anything we could have hoped for by other means and we look forward with eagerness and hope to all that will flow from it.

The final result of the Pope's visit, to which our notice should be drawn, is that, due to the decline of the teaching of religion both in homes and schools and a general lack of knowledge of the past and a disinterest in it, what the Pope was seen to do and heard to say in the liturgical part of his activities was a novelty which touched the imagination of all his non-Catholic, non-Church going television viewers, and seeds were thereby sown from which fruit may well spring.

This visit underlined what making history means and the hearts of all of us are glad.

*Shared prayer: Pope John Paul II and the Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie kneel in the Martyrdom Chapel of Canterbury Cathedral in England.*

Photo: UPI

# "We commit ourselves..."

*An extract from the Common Declaration signed by Pope John Paul II and the Archbishop of Canterbury at Canterbury Cathedral on May 29, 1982*

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission has now completed the task assigned to it with the publication of its final report and, as our two communions proceed with the necessary evaluation, we join in thanking the members of the commission for their dedication, scholarship and integrity in a long and demanding task undertaken for love of Christ and the unity of his Church.

The completion of this commission's work bids us to look to the next stage of our common pilgrimage in faith and hope towards the unity for which we long. We are agreed that it is now time to set up a new International Commission. Its tasks will be to continue the work already begun; to examine, especially in the light of our respective judgments on the final report,the outstanding doctrinal differences which still separate us, with a view towards their eventual resolution; to study all that hinders the mutual recognition of the ministries of our communions; and to recommend what practical steps will be necessary when, on the basis of our unity in faith, we are able to proceed to the restoration of full communion. We are well aware that this new commission's task will not be easy, but we are encouraged by our reliance on the grace of God and by all that we have seen of the power of that grace in the ecumenical movement of our time.

While this necessary work of theological clarification continues, it must be accompanied by the zealous work and fervent prayer of Roman Catholics and Anglicans throughout the world as they seek to grow in mutual understanding, fraternal love and common witness to the Gospel. Once more, then, we call on the bishops, clergy and faithful people of both our communions in every country, diocese and parish in which our faithful live side by side. We urge them all to pray for this work and to adopt every possible means of furthering it through their collaboration, in deepening their allegiance to Christ and in witnessing to him before the world. Only by such collaboration and prayer can the memory of past enmities be healed and our historical antagonisms overcome.

Our aim is not limited to the union of our two communities alone, to the exclusion of other Christians, but rather extends to the fulfillment of God's will for the visible unity of all his people. Both in our present dialogue and in those engaged in by other Christians among themselves and with us, we recognize in the agreements we are able to reach, as well as in the difficulties which we encounter, a renewed challenge to abandon ourselves completely to the truth of the Gospel. Hence we are happy to make this declaration today in the welcome presence of so many fellow Christians whose Churches and communities are already partners with us in prayer and work for the unity of all. With them we wish to serve the cause of peace, of human freedom and human dignity so that God may indeed be glorified in all his creatures. With them we greet in the name of God all men of good will, both those who believe in him and those who are still searching for him.

This holy place reminds us of the vision of Pope Gregory in sending St. Augustine as an apostle to England, full of zeal for the preaching of the Gospel and the shepherd of the flock. On this eve of Pentecost, we turn to ask the Father to give us another Advocate to be with us forever, the Spirit of truth (cf.Jn. 14,16), to lead us to the full unity to which he calls us. Confident in the power of this same Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves anew to the task of working for the unity with firm faith, renewed hope and an ever deeper love.

# An ambassador of unity

*"Finding Cardinal Bea was a grace from God." This is how, shortly before his death, Pope John XXIII expressed his profound esteem for the man who gave him such vitally important help in overcoming barriers that had lasted for centuries so as to open the way for ecumenical dialogue in the Church.*

Cardinal Bea was born in 1881 in West Germany, on the borders of the Black Forest. He became a Jesuit, and dedicated his whole life to the study and interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures. Such study might seem far removed from the search for unity among Christians, but he himself in his last years wrote that it was this work which brought him into contact with Protestant interpreters of the Scripture and also prepared him for his ecumenical labors in the future. It increased the number of his personal contacts, especially after the Congress of non-Catholic interpreters of the Bible Institute in which he took part. Also, in 1938 the Bible Institute was host in Rome to the International Congress of Orientalists. All this helped to promote mutual knowledge and trust and to form bonds of friendship for the future President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity.

Another event which prepared for future developments was the meeting in 1959 of the two great men, Pope John XXIII and Cardinal Bea, who had not known each other before. They understood one another in an extraordinary way, and Bea not only became the best interpreter of the Pope's thought and ecumenical intentions, but through his training was able to develop and deepen them.

What was the position before these new developments? Since 1949 there had been an official "instruction" on the ecumenical movement. This recognized that such a movement was the work of the Holy Spirit and asked all Catholics to work for unity, in order to encourage "our separated brethren to return to the Church," warning them of the dangers of indifferentism and of mistaken attempts to reconcile differences. It allowed collaboration in the social field, but imposed strict discipline on contacts or dialogue. The faithful were expected to do their part by prayer and the example of Christian life.

There was no suggestion of any consideration of the theological position of other Christians in the Church, which might be a starting point for constructive dialogue and meetings. Nor was there any suitable organization in the central government of the Church to make known the Church's wish to search for full communion with other Christians and their Churches and ecclesial communities; there was no organization that could assume full responsibility for this work. The ecumenical intention of the Council was announced by Pope John XXIII in January 1959 but there was still no organization to carry it out.

The first step was the establishment of a Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity. The speed with which the Pope accomplished this shows how urgent he considered it. Within forty-eight hours he agreed to the proposals made by Dr. Lorenz Jaeger, Archbishop of Paderborn, through Cardinal Bea, and twenty-four hours later he decided to put the new organization under the direction of Cardinal Bea.

The first aim of the Secretariat was to work out a theological foundation for ecumenism, and Bea found the main principle in the theology of baptism; for it is by virtue of baptism that other Christians belong to the Church, even if not

completely, and that they are in some degree in communion with the Catholic Church,though not in perfect communion. The Holy Spirit is working within them and through him they possess the life of grace and other gifts of the Spirit.

While the Council decree on the Catholic principles of ecumenism and other aspects of ecumenical work was being drafted, Bea began getting large parts of the Catholic Church ready to join the ecumenical movement officially and in reality. He was aware that many of the bishops all over the world had never had any direct contact with other Christians. So the eighty-year-old Cardinal made himself the "ambassador of unity" so as to influence opinion in Europe and North America by interviews and conferences on the most important and sensitive issues. The work of the conferences was followed up by books, and indeed the English translation of the book *The Union of Christians* became a best seller.

The Secretariat was well aware that before work on ecumenism could begin, it had to find a solution to another difficulty — the problem of "religious liberty." This was essential as a foundation for fair and just relations between the different Christian confessions, which are in a great variety of situations, some in a majority, some in a minority. It was needed, too, as the foundation for one work which confronts all Christians: the work of defending the human person and his rights against attack by totalitarian and authoritarian societies.

Here the Secretariat found itself in some difficulty, and the document on the subject had to be rewritten five times. Bea involved himself personally in the conferences on the matter, and his opinions spread all over the world. All this helped to mature and develop the Church's doctrine.

One factor that greatly helped the Catholic Church to join the ecumenical movement was the presence at the Vatican Council of observers and delegates from other Churches, especially as their number doubled between the beginning and end of the Council.

The preparations which have been outlined here produced a result that beforehand no one would have dreamed of: the decree on ecumenical action was accepted almost unanimously by the Council.

Before the Council finished its work, and as soon as the necessary foundations had been laid, the Catholic Church began to strengthen the contacts made at the Council, and, from the beginning of 1965, to develop ecumenical dialogue in many directions. To this work Cardinal Bea dedicated the last three years of his life.

In February 1965 it was decided to form a "mixed working group" with the World Council of Churches to explore the areas and methods of possible collaboration. Three months later a similar group was set up with the World Federation of Lutherans, and two years after this with the Anglican Communion and the World Methodist Council.

The Orthodox Church had raised the question of starting a theological dialogue with Rome in the autumn of 1964 at the third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes.

The conference chose to prepare the ground more thoroughly first, and left development of mutual relations with the Catholic Church to individual Orthodox Churches With regard to this a most important step was made at the end of the Council: "to remove from the bosom and memory of the Church" the deplorable mutual excommunication of Rome and Constantinople which took place in 1054. So there no longer needed to be any impediment to normal relations between the two Churches.

The first theological dialogue began in the autumn of 1967 on the theme of "The Gospel and the Church," following the preparatory work of a mixed group involved with the World Lutheran Federation. The World Council of Churches began a theological dialogue on the subject of the catholic and apostolic nature of the Church, and also began to collaborate in charitable and social work, development and peace.

There is still a vast field to face: ecumenical activity in the Catholic Church itself. What was accomplished in the Council and those first dialogues has now to be translated into action in the local Churches and among the great mass of Church members. In other words, there is a need for a general mobilization in favor of unity throughout the whole Catholic Church. On this matter the Council decree on ecumenism said: "The task of rebuilding unity concerns the whole Church, both the faithful and their pastors, and touches each person according to his capacity, as much in everyday Christian life as in studies of theology and history."

Only a few weeks before his death Pope John XXIII told a friend, "I think the Lord gave me a great grace in finding Cardinal Bea." It was also a grace for Cardinal Bea who became an instrument in the hand of God to bring about a spiritual upheaval in the Church as a result of the Council decree on ecumenical activity, of the declarations on religious liberty and on the relations of the Church with non-Christian religions, particularly with the chosen people of the Old Testament. All this was indeed a great grace for the Church.

**John Cardinal Willebrands**
*President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity*

# meeting TERESA

compiled by
ORESTE PALIOTTI

*Endowed with an abundance of spiritual and human attributes, Teresa of Avila was one of the most fascinating personalities ever to walk upon the face of the earth. The present centenary again brings the attention of the world to focus on her experience of life, her message and her extraordinary capacity for loving God and her fellowmen.*

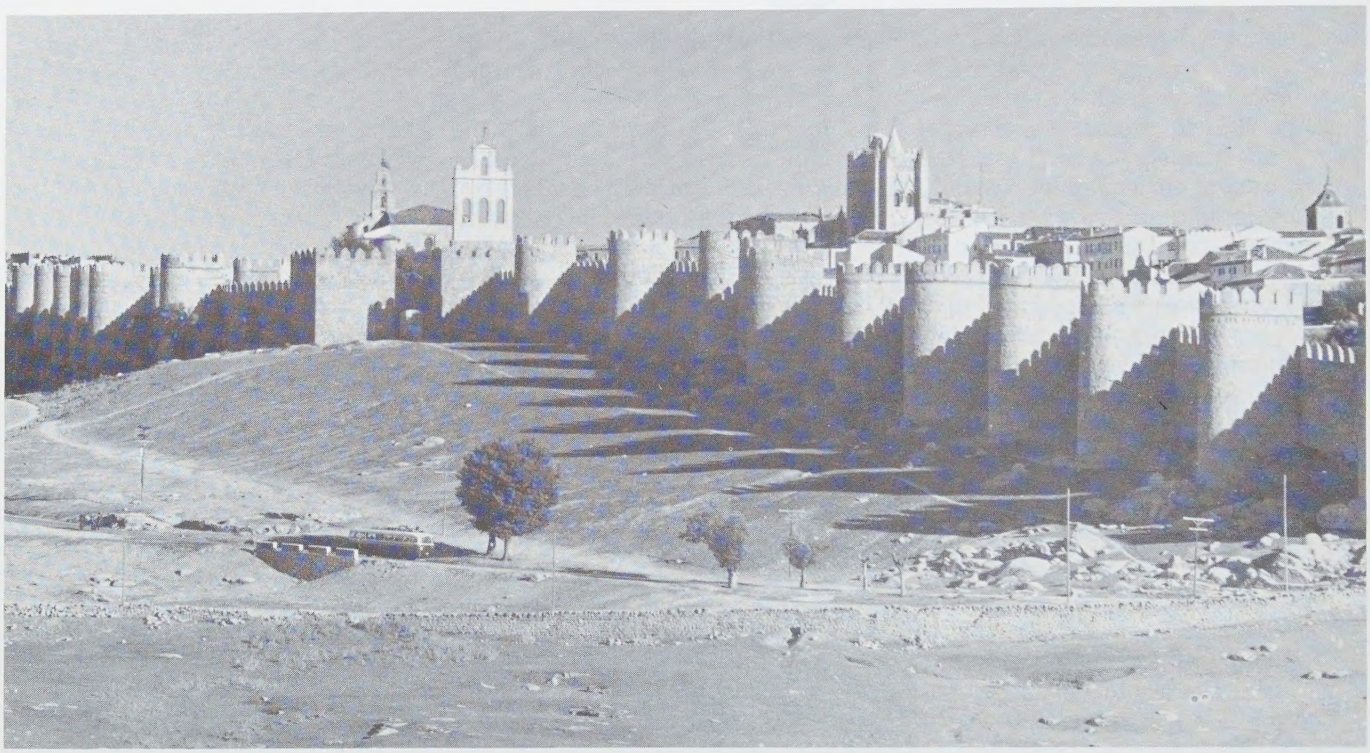


Photo courtesy Spanish National Tourist Office

One thing is certain: to the sons and daughters of her Discalced Carmelite Order, Teresa of Avila — the "holy mother" as she is affectionately called — is not a figure of the past, but a living presence, a companion along the road.

Whoever visits a Carmelite convent or monastery today, immediately feels this presence in the intensity of prayer, and in the simplicity and joy with which all are welcomed. I experienced it myself during a brief visit to the convent of the Three Marys in Rome, one of the green oases of peace one can still find right in the heart of this capital.

From Sister Maria Carmela, the Prioress, to twenty-year-old Sister Benedetta, perhaps the youngest and certainly the most recent arrival, still in her street clothes, all have given answers that go straight to the essential. And what emerged from our conversation was the same "Teresa-friend-of-God-friend-of-mankind" I had found in reading one of her famous and popular biographies. In fact, even Brother Luis de Leon, the Spanish humanist who was the first to edit St. Teresa's works back in 1588, had already found her image reflected both in her writings and in the daughters of the Carmelite Order. If he were among us now, he would stand firm by that statement, even though Teresa's daughters today may be speaking Korean, Swedish, Thai, or Japanese, and can be found in the Church from Iceland to Tasmania, to Africa as well as throughout the Far East.

**Sister Mary of the Eucharist (France):** "I was barely seventeen when I discovered St. Teresa. It was not an intellectual message she gave us, but a message of life; she conveyed the overwhelming experience of striking out on a path towards God. I completely fell in love with it; I was set on fire. We live this message in a context of ex-

*ABOVE: The unmistakable outline of the walls of Avila, birthplace of St. Teresa, in Castille. They were built at the end of the XI Century by Alphonoso VI as a defense against Arab invasions.*

*PREVIOUS PAGE: Teresa of Avila in a portrait by an unknown painter in Madrid, end of the XVII Century. Her presence continues today in about 1,000 cloistered convents and monasteries spread throughout eighty-eight countries, with 3,500 Carmelite monks and 13,000 Carmelite nuns.*

treme simplicity. I think that in this difficult moment in history, in the midst of sometimes even necessary changes, the one thing that cannot change is this flame that takes hold of our heart and transforms it into a Teresian heart which continues the ideal of St. Teresa in the Church, even after four centuries."

**Sister Ann of the Holy Spirit:** "When, at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three years, I read her autobiography — at that time I hadn't had any contact with the Carmelite Order — it was really love at first sight. I discovered what the friendship and presence of Christ could mean in a person's life. It was almost like having him before us — seeing him, speaking to him, looking into his eyes, being incapable of ever letting him out of our sight, as Teresa said. To us Discalced Carmelites, our Order is the life, the experience, the very presence of the 'holy mother' — and, of course, of St. John of the Cross, but right now we are talking about St. Teresa."

**Sister Deolinda (Brazil):** "I came to know St. Teresa of Avila through St. Therese of Lisieux; first the 'little,' then the 'great' Teresa. Before coming here, I had read only her autobiography and part of the *The Way of Perfection.* I was enthusiastic about her way of looking at prayer, about her love for the universal Church. I really would love to be like her."

**Sister Mary Stephanie:** "The Carmelite message as expressed both by St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross could be significant to many — especially to young people — if presented to them in the right way. It truly offers that fullness of life, even in the mystical, contemplative sense, which so many of today's doctrines, including yoga, promise but which end up leading no one knows where. I often think about this, because I myself had been searching for an ideal."

**Sister Benedetta:** "I met Teresa three years ago by mere chance: a friend of mine gave me some of her works to read. At first I thought: she is a doctor of the Church; I won't understand a thing. But little by little, as I went on reading, I felt a growing interest in this woman who was so full of energy, who carried on her battles without ever stopping. I wanted to read all her works, one after the other, and at the end I was utterly won over. In my desire to know more, I looked up the nearest Carmelite convent in the phone directory, and when I came here I realized that we were speaking the same language. St. Teresa had impressed me in the essentials, in the things I had been looking for. On certain points, such as charity towards our neighbor, she was absolutely adamant..."

**Sister Mary Carmela:** "It's true, St. Teresa speaks very often about charity in all her writings, constantly repeating the words of

*(Continued on page 11)*

Photo courtesy Spanish National Tourist Office

*RIGHT: The convent of the Incarnation at Avila, where Teresa lived during the first twenty years of her Carmelite experience.*

# Teresa of Avila

| | |
|---|---|
| 1515 | On March 28, Teresa is born in Avila, to Don Alonso Sanchez de Cepeda and Dona Beatriz de Ahumada. |
| 1521-1522 | First stirrings of childhood religious fervor. |
| 1528-1531 | After the death of her mother, interest in frivolous books and in superficial things of feminine vanity and refinement. Completing her education in the school of the Augustinian Sisters of St. Mary of Grace, she rediscovers the truth of the Gospel. |
| 1535 | On November 2 she runs away from home and is admitted to the convent of St. Mary of the Incarnation as a Carmelite postulant. |
| 1537 | On November 3 she makes her religious profession. A mysterious illness compels her to leave the convent and seek a cure. The reading of *Tercer Abecedario* by Osuna helps her in her life of prayer. |
| 1539-1540 | Having regained her health, she returns to the convent and spreads the practice of mental prayer among the nuns. |
| 1543 | On December 24 her father, Alonso de Cepeda dies in Avila. |
| 1544-1554 | Teresa goes through a difficult spiritual crisis. She feels attracted by God and at the same time by human conversation. She experiences solitude, helplessness and aridity. After her "conversion" she begins to enter a period of mystical graces. |
| 1560 | Teresa meets St. Peter of Alcantara and receives great help from him. She plans the foundation of a new Carmelite convent which is to be poor, small, made up of true friends of God who want to dedicate their lives to prayer at the service of the sanctity of the Church. |
| 1562 | On August 24 she inaugurates the small convent of St. Joseph of Avila, cradle of the Teresian Carmelite Order, but must leave on the same day to report to her Superior. She cannot return until December 5 of that year. |
| 1563-1567 | Teresa is elected Prioress of her first Carmelite convent. She writes *The Way to Perfection* and the *Primitive Rule.* In 1565 she completes her *Autobiography.* The General of the Order gives her permission to found new convents and monasteries for "contemplative" nuns and for monks as well. In 1567 she founds the second one at Medina del Campo. |
| 1568-1569 | New foundations at Malagon and at Valladolid. At Medina del Campo she meets St. John of the Cross and involves him in the foundation of a monastery of Carmelite monks with the same spirit. In 1569 she founds the monastery of Toledo. |
| 1570-1575 | Other foundations: Salamanca (1570), Alba de Tormes (1571), Segovia (1574), Beas (1575), Caravaca (1575), Seville (1575).<br>Increasing problems are caused by the beginning of the Reformation. Accused by the Inquisition, Teresa expresses, in beautiful words of self-defense, her spirit of humble and enlightened submission to the teachings of the Church. In the meantime, her interior life is strengthened by mystical gifts such as the grace of "spiritual marriage" (Nov. 18, 1572), the highest degree of union with God. |
| 1577 | On June 2, at the request of her confessor, Father Jerome Gracian, she begins to write her spiritual masterpiece, *The Interior Castle.* |
| 1580-1581 | More foundations: Villanueva de la Jara (1580), Palencia (1580), Sora (1581). Teresa's work is consolidated, also in regard to the monks' monasteries constituted as a separate Province in 1581. |
| 1582 | After founding one more convent in Burgos and completing her book entitled *The Foundations,* Teresa dies on October 4 at Alba de Tormes, expressing her desire to see God, "It is time that we meet, my Spouse" and her desire to be a daughter of the Church, "At last, Lord, I die as daughter of the Church." |
| 1622 | On March 12, St. Teresa is canonized by Pope Gregory XV. |
| 1970 | On September 27, she is proclaimed by Pope Paul VI to be the first woman doctor of the Church. |

*(Continued from page 9)*

St. John, the Evangelist: 'A man who does not love the brother that he can see, cannot love God, whom he has never seen' " (1 Jn.4:20). In one passage she also mentions love for those who are far away. This missionary spirit is exquisitely Teresian. She warns us, however, to be careful not to fall prey to illusion. It can happen, in fact, that while burning with the ideal of saving those far away, we may ignore the problems of the sisters we have with us every day, and fail to make ourselves available to help them grow in the love of God.

"Furthermore, the entire set-up of the Carmelite Order reflects the conviction that mutual love must be given first place: it is truly the life of a family, simple, and in harmony with a life of personal communion with God. This was very close to St. Teresa's heart.

"None of us, however, has entered the Carmelite Order exclusively for the sake of enjoying a state of union with God; underneath it all there is an immense desire of salvation for all, of an apostolate that bears much fruit.

"St. Teresa said: 'You must become great friends of God, because if you do, everything you ask for will be given to you.' And I think that, after years in the Order, many of us have deepened this power of contact. I feel more and more in communion with all my brothers and sisters in the very heart of God. It is a communion achieved in an entirely spiritual way, which some day will overflow into reality when I shall meet them. Why? Because we are already in communion. It will be like meeting someone I already met before; there will be no stranger, but someone I had expected."

**A map of the Teresian foundations testifies to the indefatigable "wanderings" of the saint. In the last fifteen years of her life she founded sixteen convents and monasteries, covering over 9,650 miles across Spain, traveling summer and winter, on muleback or in a cart which, when necessary, served as her night sleeping quarters.**

# "Friends of God throughout the world: Unite!"

*An interview with Father Jesus Castellano Cervera, OCD*

In the huge Doria-Pamphili Park in Rome, stands the "Teresianum," the Discalced Carmelites' Institute of Spirituality and their most important center of studies. Nearby, the basilica of the child martyr, St. Pancras, with modern architectural lines stands out in remarkable contrast among the pine trees and cypresses.

The "moderator" of the Institute is Father Jesus Castellano Cervera, an old acquaintance of mine. He is Spanish, as was St. Teresa herself.

**Now 400 years after her death, is there a particular contribution which St. Teresa can give us today?**

"Yes, there is. And it is the cultural, spiritual, and pastoral imprint she has left us. Practically everywhere the Order of the Discalced Carmelites is present, the voice of Teresa is heard in lecture courses, in moments of prayer, in spiritual gatherings. Her religious experience is studied by theologians and scholars interested in all that pertains to spiritual matters, but it is

## You, Lord, did not despise women

**Teresa suffered very much because of the status of inferiority to which some theologians of her time used to relegate women. (Melchior Cano, a theologian from Trent, even forbade them to read the Bible and meditate.) Once, when she had the opportunity to speak out on the subject, Teresa wrote a little known page, which was carefully omitted from the manuscript of the first edition of her work, *The Way of Perfection.* As time went on, however, Teresa's pen, just as her truth — proved to be stronger and more lasting than the theological censor's reproof. Once out in the open, her work became a prophetic text on the value of "Christian" feminism.**

"Oh, my Creator ... when you walked here on earth, you did not despise women. On the contrary, you always looked at them with great benevolence and found so much love and even more faith in them than you found in men ...

"Isn't it enough, Lord, that the world wants to keep us in isolation ...? Can it be true that we are unable to do anything valid for you in public, that we may not dare speak any truth openly? Is it possible, Lord, that you do not hear us when our request is so just? I do not believe it, Lord, because I trust in your goodness and justice. I know that you are a fair judge and not like the judges of the world who, being sons of Adam and only human, do not believe there can be female virtue that is not above suspicion. But the day will come, my King, when all of us shall come to know one another. I am not speaking about myself — the world knows my misery by now, and I am content. But when I look at these times of ours, I do not think it is fair that so many virtuous and strong minds and souls be underestimated only because they belong to women."

**Teresa of Jesus**

also of interest to psychologists and those studying religious phenomena as such; and from the point of view of literature, her style of prose is that of a delicate, enchanting classicism.

"Through publications of her works, doctrinal commentaries, theological studies, Teresa continues to speak of God, of Christ, of prayer, of the Christian commitment. It is surprising to see how modern her doctrine is even today, how incisive are her ideas. I am convinced that those who participated in Vatican II are already, or may become, the most avid readers Teresa has ever had — so great is her understanding of present-day sensitivities, of that hunger for communion with God, which is so evident during these times."

**Do the figure and the doctrine of Teresa of Avila have an ecumenical scope?**

"They certainly do. Her books are widely diffused outside the Catholic Church. Allison Peers, an Anglican, is Teresa's classical translator into English; Seippo A. Teinomen, a Lutheran from Finland, recently translated her principal works into his language; the wife of the Russian theologian Georges Florovsky — she is Orthodox — wrote a Russian version of the *The Interior Castle.* The Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey, Roger Schutz, the prior of Taizé and other scholars have paid homage to the Teresian spirituality. Patriarch Athenagoras read Teresa's writings in Castillian...

"There is, furthermore, among the Eastern religions a great interest in certain points of her spirituality, because of the great inner depth of her vision of man and his relationship to God. Some people have even discovered points of reference to certain themes of Judaic and Islamic mysticism. And even Marxists like Garaudy recognize and share in Teresa's high values because of her exaltation of human love at the service of one's fellowmen."

**But what exactly does Teresa mean by "prayer?"**

"Prayer is the answer to God, who has revealed himself as a 'friend of humanity'; friendship with God is Teresa's definition of Christian prayer. Through it we can find God in ourselves, present in our innermost being, open to commune with us: a communion with God in which man finds the highest expression of his own dignity. If the encounter occurs in the form of an interpersonal relationship, as a happening of faith, hope, and love, we have the story of a friendship in which man is totally absorbed and in which God begins to fully reveal himself. Prayer becomes life, and life becomes a story of salvation, with a dynamic power beyond any expectation. Thus touched by the Spirit, the Christian is transformed into the 'new man'. This is the mystery of Christian sanctity."

**Is there no danger of intimism?**

"Certainly not. The encounter with God takes place within the Church, which is revealed as the communion of brothers and sisters, as children of God. This is what happened in the heart of St. Teresa. Also, prayer generates the mysticism of ecclesial service — the surest sign of our love for God is, in

fact, our love for our neighbor. In the Teresian vocabulary the word 'to serve' occurs just as often as does the word 'to pray'. "

**What does Teresa of Avila have to say to women of our times?**

"I think that reading without prejudice about her vicissitudes would be greatly encouraging to today's women. If one does not stop at the partial aspects of Teresian iconography, such as the *Transfixion* of Bernini,[1] and if one thinks of Teresa as a writer, a teacher of scholars, an undaunted traveler journeying through the roads of Spain to found convents, a friend of God, a friend of humanity, a person blessed with a great capacity to draw others along the same path to God, a woman of peace who criticized the military methods of Philip II and acted as a mediator of reconciliation in a war between Spain and Portugal, a founder who gave to a community of women in the Church a very human life-style and a deep ecclesial commitment — if all this is thought of, the Christian woman of today can find in Teresa of Avila one of the highest manifestations of true 'feminism' in the Church.

"Actually, her ability to draw others to seek God lay in her sincerity, which attracted even those who did not feel they belonged to the Church. I read with great interest the opinion of a feminist group in Pisa which appeared in their publication *The Fight Goes On.* It was, on the whole, a very positive judgment, based on a careful reading of Teresa's autobiography."

**And what is Teresa's message to**

*A view of Toledo, the ancient capital of Spain on the Tagus River, with the outlines of the Cathedral and the fortress, the Alcazar. It was here that among great difficulties, Teresa of Jesus founded her fifth convent in 1569, and in 1577 began to write* **The Interior Castle,** *one of the greatest works of mystical literature of all times.*

Photo courtesy Spanish National Tourist Office

**the young, and to the Church movements of our day?**

"There is a youth movement in Spain which is inspired by St. Teresa's saying: 'In these times there is a need for very strong friends of God'. This movement is, in fact, called *Amigos fuertes de Dios* (Strong Friends of God), and the title itself indicates an intimate relationship with God, faithfulness to this choice, and a strong communitarian sense of living. It seems to me that the Teresian message goes more or less along these lines: first of all a passionate search for Christ in the Gospel through a vital contact with the Word of God. (St. Teresa recalls from her youth, 'The words of God made a powerful impact on my heart, both when I read them or listened to them'.)

"In the second place, I would like to repeat the saint's great challenge: we cannot live the experience of God by ourselves; we must communicate it, find others with whom we can share it, in order to mutually help one another to go against the current. The cry of Teresa sounds more or less like this: 'Friends of God throughout the World: Unite!'

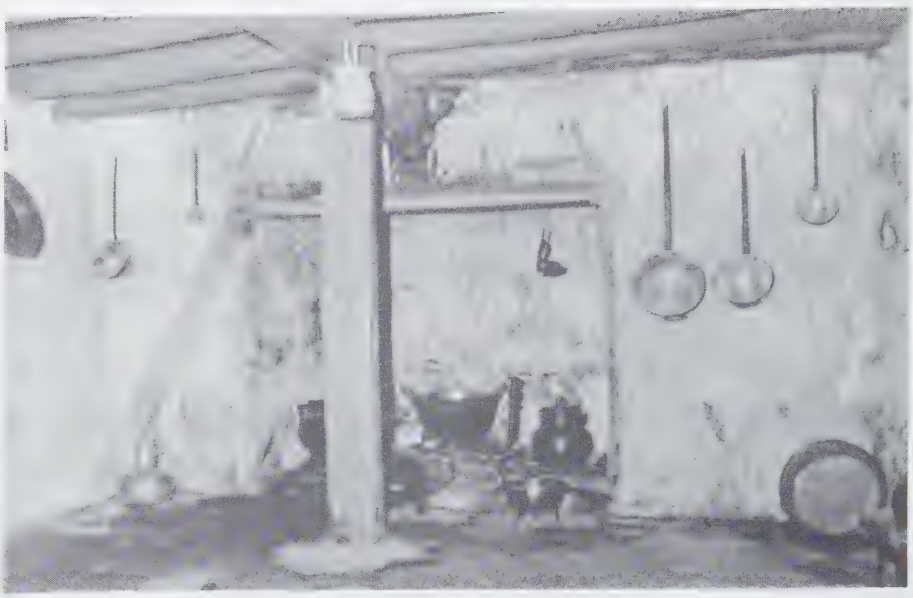
"In the third place, I have the impression that she not only points to personal prayer but also to communitarian prayer, as the typical means through which we can find ourselves in front of God, and meet God himself.

"Finally, the Teresian message is always typically ecclesial: to love the Church, to feel it as a reality in which we are immersed, and to which we are responsible to the point of carrying the Church's burdens, problems and worries throughout history, as Teresa herself did in her time."

**What is your personal rapport with St. Teresa, the founder and the source of the charism which you are living?**

"My long, continuous familiarity with Teresa's writings and with her experience of prayer allow me to say that to me she is alive, she is like a mother. In reading her works, I have no difficulty understanding their inner meaning, as though it were a family secret I have come to share innately. It is as though I were living with her, and thus being given the ability to understand the evangelical roots of her doctrine, as well as her references to the Bible, and to put her words into practice with a great broad-mindedness like that found in the Gospel.

"Founders, if we may say so, have the added grace of living a new existence in their children. Thus, I feel that through me Teresa wishes to donate her experience to the Church of our day."



*ABOVE: The country-type kitchen of the Convent of St. Joseph of Avila, the first to be founded by St. Teresa. She taught her companions that interior dialogue with God could go on anywhere, even in the kitchen, as long as charity kept them busy among the pots and pans.*

*RIGHT: St. John of the Cross. He was only twenty-five years old when he became a disciple of Teresa in the newly reformed Carmelite Order. Saint Teresa had a great love mixed with deep respect and admiration for him. She called him her "little Seneca" because of the quiet wisdom of his words and advice.*

*1) Gian Lorenzo Bernini, an Italian sculptor of the 1600's, whose sculpture of the altarpiece in the Cornaro Chapel in Rome depicts a stage where an angel is poised to drive an arrow into the heart of a swooning St. Teresa.*

# Not how much but how

by CHIARA LUBICH

For the Christian, it is not *how much* he does, but *how* he does it, that counts.

Not even the historical Jesus changed the world. At times, in fact, he seemed to fail. What is important is to fulfill the plan God has for us — no more, but certainly no less.

Let us work at our job, adoring his will which binds us not only to the present moment in time, but also to a single detail of the task we must achieve in the world.

Certainly, if we are disunited, like a lot of separate pieces, we will have the impression that we are achieving precious little. But if we are united, what one does is seen in connection with all that the others are doing. And then every action will take on a dimension and a quality which is not just universal — the universe is small compared with heaven — but is heavenly.

Let us love then that smile we give, that job we do, that car we drive, that meal we prepare, that activity we organize, that tear we shed for Christ in our neighbor who is suffering, that instrument we play, that article or letter we write, that happy event we share joyfully, that suit we clean...

Everything, everything can become a means to show our love for God and our neighbor. Everything has been entrusted into our hands and into our hearts, like the crucifix given to missionaries, for the evangelization we have to carry out in the world.

# LC TIE LINE throughout the world

*The LC TIE LINE of this issue offers to our readers some thoughts that Chiara Lubich shared during the month of August in a conversation with members of the Movement. They are printed here together with some news of the Movement.*

A word of the Gospel that we are trying to put into practice this month is this: "Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean" (Mk.7:15). This phrase is calling us to be, in every moment of our day, love — love for God and for our neighbor. In fact, only this attitude guarantees that what stems from the inner part of us (for example our thoughts, our desires, our hopes, our actions) is truly good, that is, worthy of people who see their life as a holy journey.

I have tried to put these words into practice, too, because it is the will of God for us to live his word, and now I can share with you my experience so that we can encourage one another to go ahead.

I have noticed that in the evening, at the moment of the examination of conscience, if there are actions I feel sorry for, they are those actions which were not the fruit and result of love, those actions which did not have their roots in love.

I imagine that this must be true for all of us, since hopefully and most likely I don't imagine it is robberies, murders, adultery, or other evil things that Jesus mentions, which cast a gloom over our life, which wants to be a committed Christian life. Our days instead are often clouded by small vanities, attachments, judgments, resentments, selfishness, acts of pride, distraction in prayer, small acts of envy, excessive hurry, a lack of commitment in our work, sins of gluttony or other imperfections which at any rate endanger the holy journey of our life.

What should we do then? Let us live the days to come concentrating on our love for God and neighbor. Let us do it with all of our self, without holding back even minimally. It will be possible then, when we examine our conscience, to say, "Yes Jesus, in that moment, in that action, I loved you with my whole heart." And let's do it, not so much because we want to be perfect, but because we love him.

We want to be very careful and see that all our actions are prompted by love and only love. If it is so, in the evening our hearts will be full of gratitude to God and we will have nothing to regret.

CHIARA LUBICH

King Baudouin at the Center in Callenelle

**Belgium:**

A center of formation for members of the Focolare Movement in Belgium recently opened in Callenelle on the outskirts of Tournai. The center, named Mariapolis Center 'Unity', is modest in size but well planned. The building itself, located on the premises of a home economics school which had closed, was furnished through the generosity of the members of the Movement.

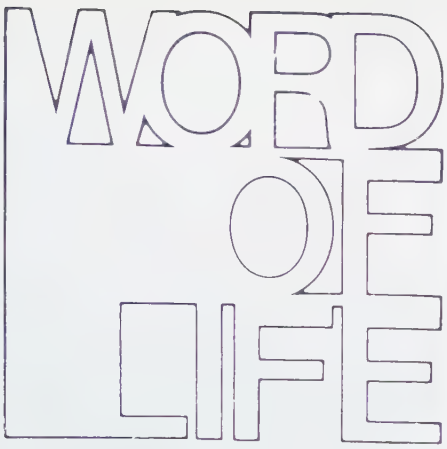
Its characteristic, as its name suggests, is the promotion of a spirituality based on mutual love, love which overcomes any kind of human barrier. No distinctions are made between languages, ages or social classes; and this is particularly significant in a nation composed of two language groups, the French and the Flemish, which, for many reasons, contrast with one another.

One of the first visitors to the Center after it opened its doors on June 16, 1982 was the king of Belgium, King Baudouin. He had come to Callenelle to visit a well-known factory which produces more than fifty percent of all the billiard balls manufactured in the world - a fact which has its importance and its significance considering the present day crisis in the industry.

Following his trip to the factory, the "first among the Belgians" then stopped off to visit the new Mariapolis Center. There he was welcomed by several hundred members of the Movement from all over the country.

During this visit, which lasted more than two hours, the king asked many questions about the history of the Movement, its spirituality, its spreading and many activities. He then stopped to speak, in an open and friendly way, with many of those present. It was a chance for each to get to know the other, and it prompted the king to comment at the conclusion of his visit that the Center represented "a great hope" for Belgium.

For those present it was an opportunity to appreciate the king's humility, his ability to listen, his genuine goodness — all excellent qualities for stimulating the country (in spite of its present difficulties) towards that unity which the Center with its activities would also like to achieve on a spiritual level.




**"Go; your faith has saved you" (Mk. 10:52).**

*The word makes us live.*

*The word makes us free.*

*The word guarantees happiness.*

*The word converts.*

*The word purifies us.*

*The word draws us to our specific vocations.*

*The word brings forth the hatred of the world and the sanctity of the disciple.*

*The word makes us see the truth.*

*The word brings comfort.*

*The word gives us joy.*

*The word produces works.*

*The word gives wisdom.*

*The word preserves us from human concerns.*

*The word obtains everything.*

*The word brings about union with God.*

*The word gives us hope of eternal life.*

*The word makes us one.*

*The word changes one's mentality.*

*The word makes each soul a heaven.*

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

As Jesus left Jericho, followed by a large crowd, a blind beggar, who was sitting at the side of the road, began to shout: "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" Many of the crowd scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder. Jesus had him brought over and spoke to him: "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "Master, let me see again." Jesus answered:

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

In this, as in many of the accounts of cures performed, we note that Jesus, before working a miracle, requires faith.

We could think, in fact, that Jesus worked miracles in order to arouse faith in people; from his words, however, we understand that he requires faith before he performs the miracle.

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

Jesus requires faith. This faith is not some sort of magic power nor is it a psychological preparation to ready the person for the cure. Jesus, in fact, sometimes rewards the faith of other people, not just the sick — like the centurion, for example, who had asked Jesus to cure his servant.

Jesus requires faith; faith in him for whom everything is possible.

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

Through faith, we clearly show that we are not relying on ourselves but on One who is stronger. Not counting on our own strength we turn to God, awaiting everything from him, and this allows him to work.

An example of this kind of faith, as we said before, is the centurion who recognizes his own unworthiness. He knows he is powerless but at the same time he expresses his complete trust in God: "Sir, I am not worthy to have you under my roof; just give the word and my servant will be cured" (Mt.8:8).

Faith then is indispensable to the cure because God respects the dignity and freedom of the person, and does not act unless the person wants him to.

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

We know that in these modern times to refuse to assert one's independence and to open oneself up to the power of God are often considered as demeaning or as not being true to oneself.

The fact is, however, that if we are intent upon asserting our own independence, we become closed within ourselves and end up face to face with our own limitations.

If, instead, we open ourselves up to God, we welcome in Someone who is greater than we are, who can truly help us to fulfill ourselves and be happy.

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

But this faith in our hearts, which is the necessary premise to the action of God in us, is only a first step toward doing what God wants from us.

The trust in the hearts of those who ask for God's help is actually destined to become a deep relationship, a full communion with him. Jesus calls the woman he cured "daughter," in order to indicate that what he most wanted to give her was not just the cure for her body, but divine life which could completely renew her. Jesus, in fact, worked miracles so that the salvation he was bringing, would be welcomed; and with it God's pardon and the gift of the Father which

was he himself. Receiving this gift we are transformed.

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

How then can we live this word of life? When serious need arises let us show God our total trust in him.

Certainly this does not free us from our responsibility or dispense us from doing all our part: it is after we have done everything possible that we can expect God's special intervention. Moreover, our faith must be put to the test as we see in the instance of the woman suffering from the hemorrhage who overcame the obstacle of the crowd which stood between herself and the Master. There was also the blind man of Jericho who was not afraid of bothering the crowd with his cries, and the leper who dared to approach Jesus, overcoming his fear of bypassing certain religious restrictions. We must have faith then, a faith which does not doubt in the face of trial.

Furthermore, we must show Jesus that we have understood the immense gift he has brought us — the gift of divine life. We must show him our gratitude and correspond to the graces we have received.

If we do this, we too will be able to ask for many graces for our earthly life and hear for ourselves:

**"Go; your faith has saved you."**

**Chiara Lubich**

# EXPERIENCES

**The following are experiences in living the Gospel which some of our readers have shared with us.**

When the word of life arrived, "For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost," I was disturbed by one phrase from the commentary: "...make yourself one, even in watching TV." In my situation I felt very strongly this was the wrong route to go.

For the last few months it seemed that the family had been watching more and more TV. I thought often of the past when for months the TV had needed repair, or when we had given it up for Lent. It seemed to me that in those periods, we had really become "family." We played cards, games, etc. The children would do things together. Now it was all fading, and inwardly, I was becoming more and more upset.

Most of the time, I would go off by myself and read. It was a separation — definitely not 'unity' — but I was doing the right thing; I had chosen the better part, or so I thought.

As the days passed by, this phrase, "make yourself one, even in watching TV" kept coming back to me, and one day, one of my friends who also tries to live the word of life suggested what I definitely did not want to hear; "Go ahead, try it; watch TV with them, and don't even suggest playing cards. Let's see what happens." I thought: "We'll be watching more and more TV," but I said I'd try it.

The first night of the first week, we watched TV, and then I understood that this *was* the way: I had to make myself 'one' with them. Sunday night we watched TV. The next night we cut up meat. The next was a wrestling match. Friday night we had company and Saturday, my husband said, "Let's play cards."

As the next week went by, I couldn't believe what was happening: we began by watching TV and I, too, sat down with them, but it was with a different attitude, a different heart. My resentment had disappeared, and it seemed as though everyone was a little happier: we were finally 'one.' At the end we were watching hardly any TV at all.

Soon I was faced with another struggle. Lent was coming and already the children were complaining: "I suppose that we have to give up TV again; it's not fair."

The night before Lent, with the family gathered around the table, I asked the dreaded question — and I couldn't believe what I heard. The children all said,"No TV!" except of course the youngest. Once he heard the others, though, he too accepted the decision.

I was overjoyed, and as the weeks have gone by, the family has grown more and more 'one.'

**B.B.**

# At any cost

*The following experience was shared at the 1982 Mariapolis by one of the participants. It is an experience of unity lived in the business environment.*

I am in the printing and publishing business. In my work I deal with numerous people who supply different component parts that go into our total business of making books. A particular experience I had took place over a period of a couple of months. It had to do with a supplier of mine who was doing type-setting: typing the words that go in the book, and that is the first step in the process of publishing a book. It's a very, very important part of the total job.

What happened in this case was that over a period of time my supplier became very lax about meeting schedules and coming up with work that was due. He was supposed to turn it over to me by a certain date so that we could go ahead to the next step. However, he began to get very slow about meeting his deadlines and it became a struggle for me because I wanted to keep up this image of always being right on top of the work, keeping the customers happy and satisfied.

One day he missed a schedule that was really, really important; it was a deadline date that we had to make on a particular book. At that point I completely ran out of patience. I picked up the phone and called him. I really threatened him in a business way, saying "This is the end as far as I'm concerned. You're not a good supplier for me; you've hurt me in my business and now for that I'm going to hurt you back. I'm not going to give you any more business and I'm not going to continue on with our relationship."

He immediately threatened me back saying "Well, I'm not going to give you any more of the work that you have coming to you until you pay me the money you owe me."

I could see what was happening. It was becoming a standoff situation — "I'll hurt you and you'll hurt me and I'll hurt you back." I was caught up in a moment of anger and fear of what this fellow was doing to me and my business. The telephone conversation ended with our dissolving our business relationship, declaring that it was the end and that we'd be happy if we never talked to each other again as far as business was concerned. "You just finish up the work we have and that's the end of this story," I told him.

That night when I went home, I felt a great emptiness inside myself, like a sadness, a real sorrow because I knew there was a better way to live. I knew the right thing to do was not what I had done, but I had failed in that moment of anger and fear about the business. That evening I talked to my wife who also works for me in my business. We discussed the problem, and then we talked about the word of life we were trying to live that month: "For the weak I made myself weak, I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost" (Cor.9:22). To live it meant trying to make myself one, trying to love and bring unity in every situation.

The next day I went back to work and I called this man first thing in the morning. I said to him, "You know, I don't feel happy about what you're doing to me, but on the other hand, I'm not happy about what I did to you yesterday, threatening you and telling you I was going to cut off the business. I'm not happy either about what you did in return to me when you said you weren't going to give me the work you owe us." I explained to him the way I felt about everything and I said, "That's not the way I like to live, and it's not the way I want to do business."

I didn't go into any explanation about how I was trying to live the word of life and the Focolare spirituality of unity. The point was not to tell him about it; it was now to try to live it.

His tone changed and his anger subsided a little bit, and we began to talk then, not about demands and threats but about possible solutions to our problems.

He began then to tell me about different situations that he had, and the reasons why he was not able to meet the deadlines and submit things that were missing. He explained that he was falling so far behind in the work because he was having serious business problems himself. Now I began to really make myself one with him, trying to see what his life was about, what his business situation was. I listened as a human being, not as a business supplier. I could sense that he then

began to feel more comfortable telling me his real situation.

It happened that his business was at the point where it couldn't grow anymore — he couldn't supply the customers that he had, and he wasn't able to go ahead because he wasn't financially secure. His wife had just had a baby and she was bringing the baby into the office every day while he was trying to do his work. She had work to do there too. I could see that this man was trying to deal with a very difficult situation. It was a big frustration, which had multiplied by the fact that I had jumped on him. It made me feel an even greater need to make myself one with this man and really love him.

Days went by and the situation continued. We still hadn't said that we were going to do business anymore. We had agreed to just settle our business nice and calmly and part our ways, but at least peacefully. Then I received a bill from him by mail. I looked at the bill and I was amazed. It was for additional work that had to be done. On a bill of that kind you can't itemize and say,"This is so much at such and such a rate." The bill was for things that were very hard to keep track of — hours of time that were spent on the job of re-doing some type-setting. At any rate, the bill was about $8,000 over the amount that I thought it should have been. Immediately my thought was, "I'm going to get this guy by the neck.... I tried to love him and look what he's doing to me."

I sat down again with my wife, and we agreed that we had to try and make ourselves one at any cost and really love this man. That was my business — not going out and trying to become the biggest company in the world. I understood I had received everything as a gift from God, and with that gift I had to go out and love the way God wanted. I saw that his will for me then was to love that man and that part of my business. I told my wife that I was going to invite him to my office, sit down with him, and go over those bills, making myself one with him. I was going to trust totally in God because if it were God's will for me to pay him more than he deserved, then I would pay it to him, and if not, then somehow it would be okay.

A few days later my business associate came. We sat down together. I was saying to myself, "Every time he says something, I'm going to show him that he's wrong; every time he's going to say, 'This is so much money,' I'm going to say 'No it's not, it's this much money'. " That was the feeling inside of me. I kept fighting against it, "No, I'm not going to do that; I'm going to really, really make myself one."

He began to go through the papers and check off the cost of the different items. Whenever he would say, "Well, this is probably $400." I wanted to scream and say, "No, it's $150," but I said to myself, "it's you, Jesus; whatever you want, that's what it's going to be." We went through the whole series; it took us a couple of hours because it was a big, long project, a book of 2,000 pages. We had to go through every page and see where the corrections were and what he was charging me.

At the end he looked at me and said, "Something's obviously wrong here; it couldn't be this much money, and I don't know why it is; but the one thing that's confusing me is why you're not arguing with me. Why aren't you saying to me it should be much less? You're making me feel really guilty because I know now it should be a lot less, but at least I would have felt better if I were arguing with you about it."

In the end, he took all the papers back to his office with him and sent me a revised bill which was $6,000 less than the original one.

Naturally I was very pleased about that, but the more important thing that happened was that as a result of really trying to make myself one with him, we began to build a different relationship. He began to see that my intent was not to harm him, as I had threatened at first, but to really try and work with him and understand him. We began to talk more about his problems and his business situation and about his inability to go ahead because he lacked the right equipment. His equipment wasn't up-to-date, but he didn't have the financial ability to go ahead and get new equipment because the leasing companies didn't consider him a good risk. It became obvious to me that I had to try to help him.

I decided to talk to the leasing company, telling them that I felt this man was a good business associate who had helped our company out in some very difficult situations. I explained to them that I intended to give him 'X' amount of dollars worth of business over the next couple of years, and that they could consider it as a guarantee.

Through our backing him and giving him the credit references he needed and the guarantee of the work that he would get from us, he was able to get the lease for new equipment and begin to expand his business.

The situation has improved now all the way around. We have received some big contracts that we can handle working together with him. His business has improved so much that now he has all new equipment. He has been able to give us more competitive prices and faster service on our work. I'm happy to say that he's able to live with his family in a more peaceful way now, too.

**B. R.**

# Images FOR words

"Strive to preserve your heart in peace and let no event of the world disturb it. Reflect that all must come to an end."

*St. John of the Cross*

UNITED NATIONS/TVA/Photo by R. Kollar

# The freedom of the children of God

*The search for God which underlies every human longing can lead us along many paths before we reach him. The young Roman couple who share their experience with us in this article seemed to be seeking happiness in drugs when they discovered the true freedom that comes only from God.*

**Luciano:** Like so many sixteen-year olds I was facing a crisis made up of all the classic ingredients: typical adolescent dissatisfaction, difficulty in getting along with people, the quite overwhelming attraction of the seemingly unattainable ideals of love, justice, liberty. I had had a traditional Catholic upbringing but it had never gone very deep; my way of life had never been influenced by it.

My life at that point seemed enclosed in a frustrating circle of steel which I couldn't break. In the morning, if I felt like it, I went to school, and spent the afternoons wandering around aimlessly. More often than not, my walks were taking me in the direction of the Spanish Steps. I began to get to know some of the other young people with their pale faces and long hair, who, like me sat for hours on the steps with their hands under their chins, staring and thinking. I vaguely remember the face of the boy who, on one of those afternoons, offered me my first "drag." I took it automatically, as though it were the only card to play at that moment. That was how I started "smoking."

I felt that it was helping me to establish a relationship with people, that external barriers were falling; the need to open up somehow to other people was growing stronger. Slowly but surely I was drawn into the orbit of the soft drug scene. The friends changed every day; only the places where people came together to smoke were more or less the same: houses occupied by someone from the crowd and open to everyone. It was there one day that I met Francesca.

**Francesca:** I had been going through a really bad crisis, too, one which I had been dragging myself through for several years. What it really came down to was a search for the truth. My parents were atheist and had wanted me to grow up like them. In fact, my mother noticed my natural religious feelings and right from the beginning of primary school asked for me to be excused from religion classes.

As I entered adolescence I really began to suffer. I was searching for a deeper, truer meaning to life, but the answers I was being given weren't for me. I felt the truth was being kept from me. "I'm not living, I'm not living," I kept crying out to my parents one day, in floods of tears. They sent me to see a psychiatrist, who diagnosed "Early symptoms of psycho-depressive crisis," which didn't tell me anything. A few days later I went along with a friend to a flat where some people had gone to "smoke." There I met Luciano. I sat down on the floor beside him and we began to talk.

We talked for a long time and even during the long silences we still understood each other, perhaps because we had the same problems, the same loneliness, the same unfulfilled need for happiness. Within a few days I had started "smoking" too and was becoming more and more involved with Luciano and the rest of the group. I needed him more than anyone; I was falling in love with him and we both felt we were made for each other. I was going home later and later, until one night I didn't go home at all. Gradually, we went on to LSD and our relationship was suddenly very close. A few months later, when I discovered I was pregnant, we immediately decided together to keep the baby, not for any higher motive, but because we wanted to "follow nature" and in our own way to defy the materialistic society we saw around us.

At that point I left my parents to live permanently with Luciano. At first we drifted from one friend's house to another, always having to move on for fear of investigation by the police. Then at last we settled into an old abandoned house. It was there that, as time passed, our hell began. Drugs were sapping more and more of Luciano's energy and giving rise to a definite violent tendency in him. Out of despair, I somehow found the strength in the final months of pregnancy to give up drugs. The baby was born in a squalid hospital, accompanied by the veiled allusions or quite open insults of the nurses.

After the birth of Paolo, we went downhill even further than before: our house was always full of people on drugs and on the run. They came and did as they pleased, sleeping on the floor. At night we used to sit round in a circle and slowly begin to talk, piecing together on our "trips" long, rambling meditations on every possible subject.

My greatest suffering was when, in cruelly lucid moments, I saw the repercussions of our way of life on the baby. We were getting to the stage of having nothing to eat because Luciano was physically destroyed and unable to work around the neighborhood any more. One night, in despair, we took a dose of a drug which was apparent-

*"...wandering around aimlessly often my walks were taking me in the direction of the Spanish Steps."*

Photo courtesy Italian State Tourist Department

ly badly cut with some acid and which brought on terrible, tearing pains. We were convinced that would be our last night.

**Luciano:** But it wasn't our last night. We went on living in despair for some time after that. I had developed arteriosclerosis; it caused me to have outbreaks of violent behavior which I directed against Francesca and the others. We were cut off from the world and divided among ourselves; we couldn't go on, and that may be why we softened our attitude towards our parents, who managed to find us and wanted to help.

More like a robot than anything else, on the advice of my mother, I telephoned a priest to see if he could prescribe a special macrobiotic diet for us and if he might have some work for me. I still remember Father Bernardo's first words on the phone. When I whispered "How are you?" he replied, "Happy to be alive." "Happy to be alive" – the answer either of a madman or of someone very special. Yet it was a reply that said everything. The whole course of our life, the drugs, the drama we were living out in that moment all sprang from that desperate desire to be "happy to be alive."

I went to see him a few days later. Our first meetings were very straightforward: we talked about the diet and he helped me with money without asking for anything in return. Maybe that made me go back to him and begin to talk about our situation. All I asked was that he should listen to me.

On one of my visits, Father Bernardo offered me a book of prayers and meditations, but I left it on the table saying I would get it another time — once I had started to believe in those things again. Then he gave me another book saying, "Well, take this one home anyway and read it." It was about the life of Jesus.

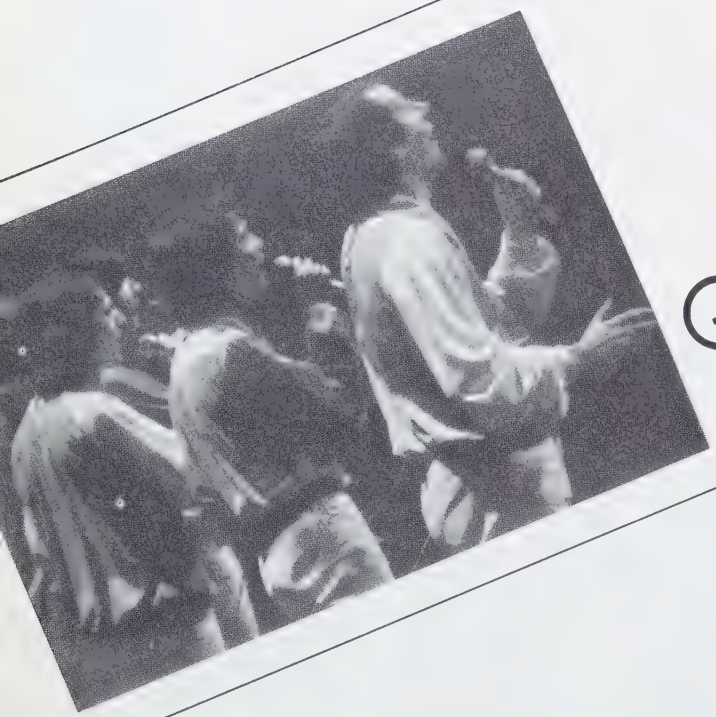
It's hard to put into words what happened. It's hard because the intervention of God, or his grace, in our life was so sudden, lighting up everything, perhaps because by then we no longer had anything of our own to be attached to. So I can't say that "gradually" we understood because suddenly there was an extraordinary light. As we read, we realized that Jesus was everything we had been searching for all those years, that his life captivated us, filled us and consoled us. We were the leper, the adultress, the blind man, the deaf man, the paralytic, and Jesus had come for us; he had already taken our wounds, our sorrows, upon himself. He had died and, most important of all, he had risen. What was more, we too could rise with him from the abyss into which we had sunk.

We drank thirstily from those pages, sensing that it was the only water which could satisfy us. It was Christmas Eve, I remember, and even that night our house was full of people abusing drugs, people we didn't know. Francesca shut herself in the bedroom, and I found enough strength from somewhere to send the others away under the threat of a possible police raid. I went back to the bedroom and we went on reading. Then at midnight I left Francesca with the baby to go to Mass in a nearby church. We both felt that we were being born for the first time that night, with Jesus.

**Francesca:** The next day we bought a toy dog for Paolo. It was his first present, the first sign of a new love for the one whose existence had kept us together in our darkest moments and kept us from going under on our own. Then we got to know Father Bernardo much better, and he helped us in the struggle we were just beginning to free ourselves slowly from drugs. It was a difficult time, with many ups and downs, yet we understood through that experience that there was no more powerful or encouraging treatment than the faith in God which was beginning to invade our life.

We understood almost right away that we could no longer have an intimate relationship without being united before God in marriage, and this choice helped, in a way, our

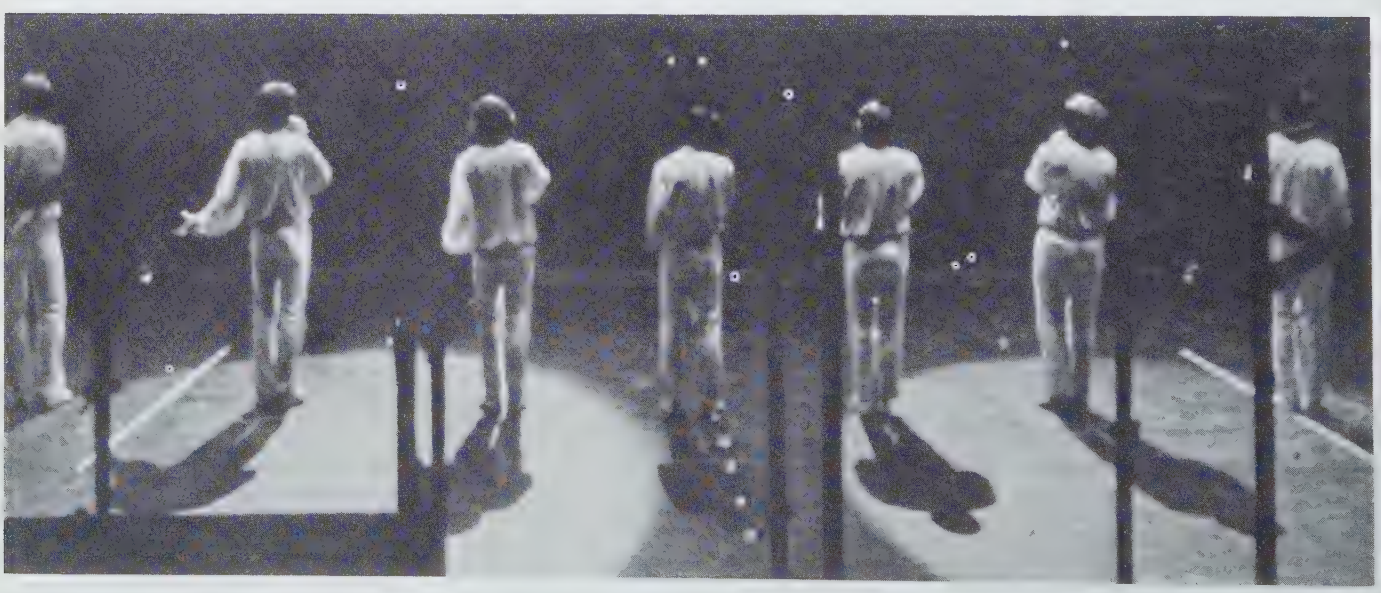
*(continued on page 28)*



# GEN ROSSO

## of the Focolare Movement

As this issue of Living City goes to press, the Gen Rosso is still on tour. The January issue of our magazine will be a special issue covering the music group's tour of the U.S.A. and Canada.



# Getting back on the track

A few weeks ago I started a new job. I accepted the position believing that this is what God wants me to be doing now, and so I enter the office each morning with the intention of living for him while I'm there and trying to build unity around me.

Soon after starting, I learned that many of the people I would have to deal with for the coming year were a lot older than I am and had worked in my field longer. During my first few days on the job, I got the distinct impression that most of them were taking advantage of this and pushing off on me all kinds of work they either felt was "beneath" them or just didn't want to do.

For a while I managed to handle this OK. I kept in mind what Chiara Lubich[1] has told us about unity — that if we want to achieve it we have to love our neighbor without expecting to be loved in return — so I did what they asked of me whenever I could, in spite of the fact that many times they didn't acknowledge afterwards that I had been the one to do it.

I'm involved in the development of an elementary Reading program. The company I work for has its offices in New York City, but our publisher is located in Chicago. Consequently, each week the publisher sends two of its representatives to meet with us. These meetings usually last all day long, for two days.

On a recent Thursday, I was sitting in on one of these conferences feeling very tired. We had met for over eight hours the previous day. Now it was well past lunch time, and since we still had a lot to discuss we decided to send out for sandwiches and continue working while we ate.

Throughout the meetings I'd been trying to put myself at the service of others in small ways, like getting an ash tray when someone needed it, offering to xerox some reports which one person had brought in and we all had to study; bringing in more chairs when some new editors joined the meeting; and so forth.

At one point, when we were discussing a stalemated issue, I made a suggestion as to how it could be resolved, but no one paid much attention to what I said. I repeated the suggestion, at which point one of my colleagues dismissed what I'd proposed without giving it serious consideration.

For me, this was like the straw that broke the camel's back. I felt irritated and resentful, however no one seemed to notice, and the talks just went on. A few minutes later, the receptionist notified us that lunch had arrived and that it was out at the desk waiting to be picked up. Without giving it a second thought, I left to get the carton of food, but as I was walking toward the reception area it occurred to me again that whenever any little task like that had to be done I was the one doing it.

Something in the back of my mind told me that if I were less "congenial" so to speak, if I sat back a bit and made the others do things once in a while, they might respect me more instead of treating me like a hired hand. I decided to try it.

So when I brought the lunches into the conference room, instead of distributing them I set them down near the door and returned to my place at the table. Everyone was very hungry, and so almost immediately the project director suggested

that we clear off the table a bit and eat.

All of us shuffled our papers into neater piles, but nobody got up to get the lunches. "They're waiting for me to do it," I thought, so I just pretended to be studying the notes I'd been taking and didn't look up. After a minute or two, one of the publisher's reps got up and retrieved the carton of food. When the people from my company saw this some of them quickly stirred themselves too and began to hand out the sandwiches and drinks. To my surprise, one of them even handed out the napkins.

It seemed to me that I should have felt vindicated then, at least in part, but instead I felt really bad. In fact I didn't even want to eat lunch anymore. When I reflected on the situation for a moment I realized that I had knowingly followed the wrong "voice," letting my pride take the upper hand.

I made up my mind then and there to change the way I was acting, because I know that with unity as the goal of my life I can't afford to let one minute go by in which I haven't done something to build it. I decided to start loving again right away.

I quickly got up and began looking around for something I could do to love the others concretely. The deli had sent us a tray of pickles and peppers to go with the sandwiches. Someone had set it in the middle of the table, but since the table was so big, only two or three people could reach it from their seats. I took the container and began going from person to person offering it to each of them. It was a very small gesture, but as I did it my heart became light and I knew I was back on the track once more.

**Vira**

1)Chiara Lubich is the foundress and president of the Focolare Movement.

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# The young and the Gospel

I was playing with my friend and we were on the swings and one more person went on the other swing. There were no more swings left and my friend came along and she wanted to swing on a lower swing. I was on a lower swing. So I got off for her because I wanted to love.

**Maureen**
**5 years old**

I was playing in the alley and my friend took my bike and started to ride it. I ran after him but then I decided to let him ride it. I loved him so much that I couldn't even believe it.

**Shawn**
**4 years old**

This morning I was still in bed and my sister asked me to get her clothes. For a while I thought and I decided if she was Jesus I would do it. Then I got up and did it.

**Faith**
**6 years old**

One morning when I ate breakfast, I didn't eat as much as I could have and I had 20 minutes before I had to do anything so I was going to eat a real big breakfast. Then I asked myself, "Would this be the will of God for me, to eat what I don't need? What I ate was enough." So I just had some milk and had extra time to practice my violin.

**Michelle**
**12 years old**

My brother and I were playing with some new toys we got, My mother asked us to clean it up, I really didn't want to, but I did it out of love for my mother.

✱

The other day my mother asked me to clean up my room because my aunt and uncle were coming over. I didn't want to, but I did to love Jesus.

**Andrea**
**4 years old**

One day a girl names Lisa was sitting all alone at recess. I asked her, "What's the matter?" She said, "Nothing." I said, "Please tell me." She said, "All the other girls are making things up about me that aren't true." I said, "I'll be your friend." She said, "Thank you." I loved her because I remembered the word of life: "For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost." I was happy.

**Lucy**
**10 years old**

One day after I took a shower my father asked me to pick up my brother's clothes. I started to complain but then I realized that it would be more love to do it willingly, so I did it for Jesus in him.

**Joseph**
**10 years old**

*(continued from page 23)*

rebirth as individuals. I still had to be born as a Christian though, and Sister Giovanna prepared me very lovingly for my reception into the Church. Paolo and I were baptized together, as children of God entering his Church which I was beginning to love. A week later I made my first Communion and was confirmed, and two weeks after that Fr. Bernardo married us. He had a partly paralyzed leg which caused him a lot of pain, but he looked radiant, happy now "to see us living." We realized that he must always have been offering that suffering for us.

Since our marriage, we have had four other children, and each time it was a question of saying a new yes to God and of increasing our faith in him. My parents were touched by this attitude of ours. They had wanted me to have an abortion because of our financial difficulties, but they abandoned that idea when they saw how serene I was with Luciano beside me, and how our faith in divine providence just got stronger each time and was always shown to be justified.

A year ago something happened which helped our faith to grow. For some time I had been feeling the need to share our Christian life with a wider group of people. I said so to Luciano and he replied, "Let's begin to pray together for this." We recalled the words of the Gospel "If two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all..."

We did this and a few weeks later we got a phone call from Luciano's mother inviting us to a meeting of the Focolare Movement. If by ourselves we had found God within us, and he had given us back our lives, in the Movement we discovered the living presence of God in our midst, and we began in so many ways to give our life for the others. Our life now is a most wonderful experience, a real journey with God, doing his will each day, each moment. **F.L.**


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# What is the Focolare Movement?

## THE BEGINNINGS

FOCOLARE means "hearth," "family fireside." What first strikes people when they come in contact with members of the Focolare, whether in small groups or in large gatherings, is the atmosphere of a family. It is a family formed by many different people in various walks of life. The Focolare Movement is also known as the "Work of Mary." Under this name it was approved by Pope John XXIII in 1962.

The Focolare Movement began in 1943 in Italy. In the midst of the terrible destruction of World War II, Chiara Lubich realized that God is the only one worth living for. As a result, she began to center her life on the Gospel, together with a small group of young women who followed her. Their ideal became one of striving toward the fulfillment of Jesus' last prayer to the Father: "May they all be one" (Jn.17:21).

The life of Chiara and her first companions, and the spiritual way they spontaneously followed, gave rise to the unique form of spirituality of the Focolare Movement, a spirituality of unity. It has proved to be a powerful means of introducing the Gospel into modern life, of going to God together.

## WHO ARE THE FOCOLARINI

Single men and women live in separate communities called Focolare Centers. Their principal aim is to achieve unity among themselves through mutual charity practiced twenty-four hours a day. They follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. They work as other laymen and women in regular jobs and professions.

Some married persons, even though continuing to live in their families, participate fully in the life of either the men's or women's Focolare Centers in their common effort to achieve this same unity. They are called "Married Focolarini" and form the backbone of a vast Movement within the Movement, called the New Family Movement.

## THE VOLUNTEERS AND THE NEW HUMANITY MOVEMENT

The Volunteers, also called the "Volunteers of God," are a large group within the Focolare Movement; they would like to transform all human realities according to the Gospel spirit. The Volunteers are the backbone of the mass movement called New Humanity. The aim of this Movement is to help form a society made of men and women who are made "new" by the Gospel message and who can then bring new life to all fields of human activity (education, business, etc.). This results in new social relationships which, in turn, lead to the realization of new structures of society.

## GEN

The new generations of the Focolare Movement form another Movement or, better, three movements: the Gen 2, the Gen 3 and the Gen 4 Movements, divided according to their various age groups. "Gen" stands for new generation. The Gen have committed themselves to living the Gospel message of love and to sharing with other youth the conviction they have that the Gospel is the answer to every question and the motive for everything they do.

## THE MOVEMENT AMONG THE RELIGIOUS

Men and women religious — although they live according to their own rules and constitutions and are already a distinct part of the Church through their religious families — can also be associated with the Focolare.

Contact with the Movement helps them to focus their attention on the specific charism of their founders, and to see how it can be lived in the present time.

## PRIESTS — PRIESTS' MOVEMENT —SEMINARIANS — PARISH MOVEMENT

Many diocesan priests are committed to living the spirituality of the Focolare Movement. Some of them live in community. They form the backbone of the Priests' Movement which is made up of priests who live the spirituality of unity.

## FOCOLARE FAMILY

The largest group within the Focolare Movement is made up of men, women and young people who are connected with the Movement without having any formal ties with it. Their bond of unity stems from their acceptance of its spirit and their desire to live it.

## ECUMENISM

The Movement not only crossed the political boundaries of more than 100 countries, it has also gone beyond the barriers erected for centuries between the various Christian Churches.

Ecumenical activities take place in the different parts of the world where the Movement exists.

In the past few years a promising, ongoing dialogue has been established with faithful of other religions.

## SUMMER MARIAPOLIS

Summer meetings are held every year for those interested in the Movement and for those who wish to come into contact with it. For one week persons of all ages and walks of life are exposed to the spirituality of unity. Above all, they strive to practice it by creating among themselves a rapport that molds them into a community. It is intended to be a basic experience of such intense unity that the people will be able to bring it back into their own environments. And this is the most striking fruit of these conventions. They tend to be models of a world which lives according the Gospel.

## PERMANENT MARIAPOLIS

The need to prolong the experience of the summer meetings brought about the birth of small cities called Permanent Mariapolis. They are made up of young men and women, as well as whole families, who are there for a designated period of time to be formed according to the Gospel spirit of unity.

They also attend classes in Sacred Scripture, Theology and Sociology and work for their own support.

## MARIAPOLIS CENTERS

In addition to the Permanent Mariapolis, there are Mariapolis Centers, which are training centers for the members of the Movement.

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